

MICHAEL J. GROSSMAN
19528 VENTURA BOULEVARD #432
TARZANA, CA 91356

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To the members of the California Fish and Game Commission:

Gentlemen:

I have been deeply involved with the MLPA/Marine Reserves process since the very first proceedings at the Channel Islands. We are all aware of the fiasco that process turned out to be and the terrible blow to the credibility suffered by the Commission and the Department of Fish and Game as a result. I was hopeful that some lessons had been learned from that process. I was heartened by the pledge of the BRTF that they had heard the complaints and were determined not to have a repeat of that debacle as the MLPA proceeded.

In my opinion this entire process reeks of the odor of the stable rather than the ocean. Politicians have done what they always do; they have gone for the money. The result is we have a tainted process that at the very least has the appearance of being bought and paid for by elements who wish to end fishing in the State of California. The Commission's most recent action in adopting a more anti-recreational fishing plan than that finally arrived at through the BRTF process only reinforces the perception that participation in the process is futile; that the game has been rigged from the outset; and that as always, in politics money prevails.

When your "scientists" are funded by a particular group with an anti-fishing agenda what kind of objective research can you expect from them? How long will that income stream continue if their findings and reports run contrary to the agenda of the groups funding them? Even you Commissioners who are supposed to be above all of the partisanship are now perceived both by fishermen and environmentalists and being the lapdogs of the most radical enviros. If this perception is wrong it is nevertheless very real and has resulted in the alienation of the entire fishing community and the businesses that depend on it.

As an avid recreational fisherman with substantial disposable income and the time to enjoy it, I will be looking elsewhere to spend my money on fishing. Next week I leave for Mexico and in November I will be fishing in Argentina. This represents thousands and thousands of dollars of revenue that might otherwise have stayed in California. I prefer, however, to spend my money where I am welcomed as a recreational fisherman.

Other states within our great country, such as Texas, do a better job of managing the fisheries and sustaining recreational fishing. Texas is a state that would have nothing whatsoever to do with the radical animal rights and environmental groups. Yet their fisheries are flourishing and their recreational fishing community is growing. California recreational fishing community is alienated, stagnant and declining. You share a great responsibility for this sad state of affairs.

Very truly yours,

